

## Message Text

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NEA - MR. DAVIES (DRAFT)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GR, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S APPEARANCE BEFORE ROSENTHAL  
COMMITTEE

FOR AMBASSADOR TASCA

1. FOLLOWING IS DRAFT STATEMENT PREPARED FOR AMBASSADOR  
TASCA'S APPEARANCE BEFORE ROSENTHAL SUBCOMMITTEE:

2. QUOTE: MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE:  
IT IS A PLEASURE FOR ME TO APPEAR AGAIN BEFORE THIS  
COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS GREECE. I WISH TO REVIEW DEVELOP-  
MENTS IN GREECE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS AND THEN  
I SHALL BE GLAD TO TRY TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

2. EARLY LAST FALL THERE WAS A BASIS FOR RESERVED OPTI-  
MISM ABOUT THE TREND OF EVENTS IN ATHENS. PRESIDENT PAPA-  
DOPOULOS HAD GRANTED AN AMNESTY TO ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS;  
HE HAD LIFTED MARTIAL LAW IN ALL AREAS OF THE COUNTRY;  
AND HE HAD PROMISED "IRREPROACHABLE" ELECTIONS IN 1974.  
BY EARLY OCTOBER, ALL OF HIS FORMER MILITARY COLLEAGUES  
HAD RESIGNED FROM MINISTERIAL POSITIONS, AND A CIVILIAN  
GOVERNMENT WAS IN OFFICE UNDER PM MARKEZINIS, AN ABLE AND  
PROMINENT FORMER MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. MARKEZINIS HIM-  
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SELF REITERATED PLEDGE TO HOLD "IRREPROACHABLE" ELECTIONS AND SOUGHT TO PERSUADE LEADERS OF FORMER POLITICAL PARTIES TO ADOPT A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THESE ELECTIONS. IN THIS LATTER ENDEAVOR, HOWEVER, HE MET WITH LITTLE SUCCESS. SOME FORMER POLITICIANS HAD DOUBTS ABOUT THE FAIRNESS OF CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD; OTHERS CONTENDED THAT CONSTITUTION GRANTED EXCESSIVE AUTHORITY TO THE PRESIDENT AND THAT THE NEW PARLIAMENT WOULD HAVE NO REAL INFLUENCE ON MAJOR ISSUES. ONLY A FEW POLITICIANS TOOK POSITION THAT EVEN A WEAK PARLIAMENT WAS BETTER THAN NONE AND THAT, ONCE ELECTORAL PROCESS HAD BEEN EXPERIENCED AND A NEW PARLIAMENT HAD BEEN CONVENED, ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES MIGHT BE FOUND TO ACHIEVE DEMOCRATIC RULE. WHETHER THE SO-CALLED MARKEZINIS EXPERIMENT MIGHT HAVE SUCCEEDED IF MORE GREEKS HAD ADOPTED A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS IT IS A QUESTION ON WHICH WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE. ON NOVEMBER 25, ELEMENTS WITHIN THE GREEK ARMY OVERTHREW PRESIDENT PAPADOPOULOS AND ABRUPTLY ENDED THIS EFFORT TO MOVE TO ELECTIONS.

3. THERE WERE UNDOUBTEDLY A NUMBER OF FACTORS WHICH LED TO OVERTHROW OF PAPADOPOULOS GOVERNMENT. THE LEADERS OF NOV. 25 COUP BELIEVED THAT PAPADOPOULOS HAD VEERED TOO FAR FROM ORIGINAL GOALS OF 1967 REVOLUTION. THEY RESENTED PARTICULARLY HIS EFFORTS TO PERSONALIZE HIS RULE, AND THEY WERE DISTURBED THAT ASSOCIATES OF PAPADOPOULOS SEEMED TO BE PROFITING PERSONALLY FROM THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT. A PROXIMATE, IF NOT DETERMINING, CAUSE OF THE COUP WAS STUDENT UNREST IN MID-NOVEMBER, WHICH MANY FELT WAS MISHANDLED BY PAPADOPOULOS GOVERNMENT. FINALLY, THERE WAS CONCERN THAT PAPADOPOULOS' PLANS FOR ELECTIONS IN 1974 WERE PREMATURE AND WOULD LEAD GREECE BACK TO CHAOTIC POLITICAL SITUATION EXISTING PRIOR TO 1967.

4. THE QUESTION THAT NOW ARISES, AND FOR WHICH WE HAVE NO CLEAR ANSWER, IS WHEN AND UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE RESTORED TO GREECE. PM ANDROUTSOPOULOS HAS PUBLICLY STATED THAT GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO PREPARE COUNTRY FOR "UNDISTURBED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND GENUINE DEMOCRATIC LIFE". HE HAS ALSO PROMISED THAT A NEW CONSTITUTION WILL BE DRAFTED. NO TIME TABLE, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED. HE HAS SIMPLY PROCLAIMED THAT "WHEN THE COUNTRY IS READY, IT WILL BE LED TO ELECTIONS". I THINK IT IS ACCURATE TO SAY THAT THE MAIN VOICE IN DETERMINING "WHEN THE COUNTRY IS READY" WILL BE THE GREEK MILITARY.

5. LET ME COMMENT BRIEFLY ON THE MILITARY BECAUSE IT IS THE KEY FORCE IN GREECE TODAY. AS CONGRESSMAN FRASER CORRECTLY NOTED IN HIS RECENT REPORT, THERE ARE VARIOUS COMPETING ELEMENTS IN GREEK MILITARY. IN MY VIEW, VAST MAJORITY OF THE APPROXIMATELY 10,000 GREEK OFFICERS HAVE NO SPECIAL INTEREST IN POLITICS AND ARE PRIMARILY MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO SERVE THEIR COUNTRY EFFECTIVELY AS MILITARY MEN. ON OTHER HAND, THOSE OFFICERS WHO WIELD MAJOR INFLUENCE IN GREECE TODAY APPARENTLY BELIEVE THAT COUNTRY IS NOT YET READY FOR DEMOCRACY AND THAT THEY HAVE A PATRIOTIC DUTY TO RULE UNTIL CONDITIONS ARE RIGHT FOR ELECTIONS. MOST OF THEM, INCIDENTALLY, DO NOT SEEM TO BE MOTIVATED BY A SENSE OF SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT. THERE ARE OTHER OFFICERS, HOWEVER, WHO FEEL THAT THE DIRECT INVOLVEMENT OF THE MILITARY IN MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT DIVERTS MILITARY FROM ITS PRIMARY MISSION OF PROTECTING COUNTRY FROM EXTERNAL THREATS, IS INTERNALLY DIVISIVE, AND ERODES PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. THESE OFFICERS BELIEVE MILITARY SHOULD GET OUT OF POLITICS AND RETURN TO BARRACKS. IN SUM, MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT TAKEN AS A WHOLE IS NOT UNIFIED IN ITS PERCEPTION OF ITS ROLE IN PRESENT SITUATION. WE CAN INFER THAT THERE IS AT LEAST A POSSIBILITY THAT SENTIMENT IN MILITARY MIGHT SWING IN FAVOR OF EXTRICATING ITSELF FROM ITS POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT, WHICH IN TURN COULD LEAD TO REESTABLISHMENT OF A PURELY CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT. IT WOULD BE UNWISE, HOWEVER, TO PIN TOO MANY HOPES ON AN EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THIS KIND, SINCE PRESENT MILITARY LEADERSHIP APPEARS DETERMINED TO KEEP ITS HOLD ON THE REINS OF GOVERNMENT AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING.

6. AT THE MOMENT, MARTIAL LAW REMAINS IN EFFECT, AND PRESS AND OTHER MEDIA ARE CLOSELY CONTROLLED. GIVEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THESE RESTRICTIONS IT IS DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO GAUGE OPINIONS ACCURATELY, BUT I DO OBSERVE AN ATTITUDE OF WATCHFUL AND CONCERNED WAITING ON PART OF MOST CIVILIANS. MANY FORMER POLITICIANS FAVOR FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY TO LEAD COUNTRY TO ELECTIONS AND RETURN OF PARLIAMENT. WHETHER THIS TYPE OF GOVERNMENT WILL EVENTUALLY EMERGE FROM THE PRESENT SITUATION IS DIFFICULT TO PREDICT, BUT AS I HAVE MENTIONED, DECISION WILL LARGELY DEPEND ON GREEK MILITARY.

7. FINALLY, LET ME SAY A WORD ABOUT US-GREEK RELATIONS. FIRST, I WANT TO PUT TO REST TWO MYTHS WHICH HAVE BEEN BRUIED ABOUT SINCE NOV 25: I.E., 1) THE USG WAS INVOLVED IN THE COUP ON THAT DAY, AND 2) US FAVORS

PRESENT GREEK GOVERNMENT OVER SOME OTHER TYPE OF GOVERNMENT OR POLITICAL SYSTEM. NEITHER ONE OF THESE CHARGES IS TRUE. OUR HOPE HAS NATURALLY BEEN THAT GREECE WILL FIND ITS WAY PEACEFULLY TO STATED OBJECTIVE OF PRESENT GOVERNMENT, I.E., AN "UNDISTURBED AND GENUINE DEMOCRATIC LIFE". WE HAVE MAINTAINED, HOWEVER, THAT THE WAY MUST BE FOUND BY GREEKS THEMSELVES AND NOT BY OUTSIDERS.

8. THE ROLE THE US CAN PLAY IN GREECE'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IS NECESSARILY LIMITED. OUR FIRST CONCERN IS TO MAINTAIN THE TRADITIONALLY CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. WE ARE ALL AGREED, I AM SURE, THAT NOTHING WOULD BE GAINED AND MUCH LOST ON BOTH SIDES IF WE WERE TO FOLLOW A POLICY THAT WOULD INADVERTENTLY LOOSEN OUR TIES WITH GREEK PEOPLE. CRITICS OF OUR POLICY ARE CONCERNED THAT WE ARE ALIENATING GREEK PUBLIC BY CONTINUING NORMAL WORKING RELATIONS WITH A GOVERNMENT THAT LACKS POPULAR SUPPORT. THERE IS RISK THAT WE WILL ANTAGONIZE SOME ELEMENTS OF GREEK PUBLIC WHO MISCONSTRUE OUR POLICY AS SUPPORTING PRESENT REGIME. AT SAME TIME, THERE IS REALISTICALLY NO WAY TO MAINTAIN CLOSE RELATIONS WITH GREEK PEOPLE WITHOUT DEALING ON EQUABLE TERMS WITH GREEK GOVERNMENT. IN A PRACTICAL SENSE, IN OUR DAY-TO- DAY DEALINGS, WE CANNOT SEPARATE PEOPLE OF GREECE FROM GOG. THE PUNITIVE APPROACH ADVOCATED BY SOME -- TO CAST GREECE OUT OF NATO, CUT OFF MILITARY ASSISTANCE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CASTIGATE GREEK GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC -- WOULD NO DOUBT HAVE AN IMPACT ON GREECE, POSSIBLY A SEVERE ONE. THERE IS, HOWEVER, NO WAY TO FORETELL HOW THE SITUATION MIGHT EVOLVE UNDER THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES. PROPONENTS OF SUCH A POLICY OF "PRINCIPLE" OBVIOUSLY BELIEVE OUTCOME WOULD BE SALUTORY IN GREECE. THERE IS, HOWEVER, AT LEAST AN EQUAL POSSIBILITY THAT A POLICY OF THIS KIND WOULD NOT LEAD TO AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE GREEK POLITICAL SITUATION, BUT WOULD RESULT IN AN IRREPARABLE WEAKENING OF GREECE'S TIES WITH WEST. IN SUCH A CASE PEOPLE OF GREECE WOULD INEVITABLY FEEL, WHATEVER THE MERITS OF OUR INTENTIONS, THAT THEY HAD BEEN ABANDONED BY A SORELY NEEDED ALLY.

9. HAVING WEIGHED THE ADVANTAGES, DISADVANTAGES, AND RISKS INVOLVED IN ALL AVAILABLE POLICY ALTERNATIVES, WE BELIEVE THAT OUR NATIONAL INTEREST, AND THE MOST PROFOUND NATIONAL INTERESTS OF GREECE, IN PARTICULAR THE MUTUAL SECURITY INTERESTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES, REQUIRE THAT WE MAINTAIN A SATISFACTORY WORKING RELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. THESE WORKING RELATIONS

DO NOT IMPLY THAT WE APPROVE OF THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT  
IN GREECE, BUT THEY DO REQUIRE THAT WE REFRAIN FROM INTER-  
VENTION IN DOMESTIC GREEK POLITICAL AFFAIRS.

10. I SHALL BE GLAD TO TRY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THAT  
YOU HAVE. END QUOTE KISSINGER

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